REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 18 to 21 have been added. Claims 8 to 21 are currently pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the indication that all copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

II. Drawings

As regards the contention that "[t]he subject matter of this application admits of illustration by a drawing to facilitate understanding of the invention," the Examiner's attention is directed to Figure 1.

III. Specification

As regards the objection to the Specification, it is respectfully submitted that the phrase "sensors signal or feed into the amplifier system" is grammatically correct in the context that the sensors either "signal . . the amplifier system" or "feed into the amplifier system." Withdrawal of this objection is therefore respectfully requested.

IV. Information Disclosure Statement

As regards the alleged missing publications that were listed in the previously filed PTO-1449 paper, enclosed herewith is a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement again citing these publications and providing copies thereof.

V. Claim Objection

As regards the objection to claim 11, claim 11 has been amended herein without prejudice to correct the typographic error noted in the Office Action. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection of Claims 8 to 17 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 8 to 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by European Published Patent Application No. 0 304 257 ("McGregor et al."). It is respectfully submitted that McGregor et al. do not anticipate the present claims for the following reasons.

As an initial matter, Applicants note that the Office Action makes reference to U.S. Patent No. 4,965,833, which was not cited by Applicants and has not been properly cited in the Office Action. Notwithstanding the foregoing and to facilitate matters, Applicants have cited U.S. Patent No. 4,965,833 in the enclosed Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement. In the following, cites to column and line numbers refer to U.S. Patent No. 4,965,833.

Claim 8 relates to a method for operating a voice-controlled system in a motor vehicle. Claim 8 recites detecting a total signal by a plurality of microphones, and performing a frequency shift on the total signal detected by each microphone. Claim 8 further recites subtracting a frequency-shifted total signal of a first microphone from a total signal of a second microphone before performing the frequency shift on the total signal of the second microphone, and vice versa.

McGregor et al. discuss a voice enhancer system for a car, which may include two sets of microphones and two sets of speakers. Col. 2, lines 59 to 67, and col. 3, lines 13 to 22. Each set of microphones may be connected to a set of speakers. *Id.* Between each microphone set/speaker set circuit, an amplifier/electrical conditioning unit is provided to modify the microphone's detected sounds, for example by a frequency shift to increase all speech frequencies, before they are transmitted to the corresponding speaker. Col. 3, lines 1 to 4.
McGregor et al. do not disclose subtracting a frequency-shifted signal of a first microphone from a total signal of a second microphone before frequency shifting the second microphone. For example, McGregor et al. discuss a first microphone, the signal of which is intended for output via a first speaker. Col. 2, lines 59 to 67. McGregor et al. also discuss a second microphone, the signal of which is intended for output via a second speaker. Col. 3, lines 13 to 22. Although between each microphone/speaker set there may be a conditioning unit that may frequency shift the signal before outputting the signal, nevertheless, the frequency-shifted signal of a particular set is provided only to the speaker of the set, col. 3, line 55 to col. 4, line 21, and also possibly as an ***additional*** signal output via a speaker of a different set.

Col. 4, lines 22 to 34. Nowhere do McGregor et al. disclose, or even suggest, providing a frequency-shifted signal of one microphone to be ***subtracted*** from a total signal of a second microphone. Thus, McGregor et al. do not disclose, or even suggest, all of the limitations of claim 8. It is therefore respectfully submitted that McGregor et al. do not anticipate claim 8.

Claim 13 relates to a device for operating a voice-controlled system in a motor vehicle. Claim 13 recites a frequency-shifting device connected between microphones of one subsection and loudspeakers of another subsection. Claim 13 further recites a summation point corresponding to each of the subsections, such that the summation point ***subtractively superimposes*** a loudspeaker signal and a microphone signal of the respective subsection. Thus, the loudspeaker signal of a first subsection, which is a signal after a frequency shift of a microphone signal of a second subsection, and a microphone signal of said first subsection, which is a signal before a frequency shift for a loudspeaker signal of said second subsection, are subtractively superimposed.

As discussed above in support of the patentability of claim 8, McGregor et al. do not disclose, or even suggest, providing a frequency-shifted signal of one microphone, e.g., a loudspeaker signal of a first subsection, to be ***subtracted*** from a total signal of a second microphone, e.g., a microphone signal of a first subsection before a frequency shift for a loudspeaker signal of a second subsection. Instead McGregor et al. discuss providing the signal of one microphone as an additional signal for a loudspeaker of a different microphone/speaker set. Thus, McGregor et al. do not disclose, or even suggest, all of the limitations of claim 13. It is therefore respectfully submitted that McGregor et al. do not anticipate claim 13.

Claims 9 to 12 ultimately depend from and therefore include all of the limitations of claim 8. It is therefore respectfully submitted that McGregor et al. do not anticipate these dependent claims for the same reasons set forth above in support of the patentability of claim 8.

Claims 15 to 17 ultimately depend from and therefore include all of the limitations of claim 13. It is therefore respectfully submitted that McGregor et al. do not anticipate these dependent claims for the same reasons set forth above in support of the patentability of claim 13.

IV. New Claims 18 to 21

New claims 18 to 21 have been added herein. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 18 to 21 do not add any new matter and are fully supported by the present application, including the Specification. Since claims 18 and 19 depend from claim 8, it is respectfully submitted that claims 18 and 19 are patentable over the reference relied upon for at least the same reasons given above in support of the patentability of claim 8. Since claims 20 and 21 ultimately depend from claim 13, it is respectfully submitted that claims 20 and 21 are patentable over the reference relied upon for at least the same reasons given above in support of the patentability of claim 13.

V. Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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